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ADDRESS
ON THE
EDUCATION OF WOMAN,

Delibered at the Anniversary
OF THE
PITTSFIELD YOUNG LADIES' INSTITUTE,

September 30th, 1852.

BY RAY PALMER, D. D.
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ADDRESS.

It is with a very sincere pleasure that I congratulate the instructors and pupils of this Seminary, as well as the friends of education who are present, on the return of this anniversary. Several of the happiest and most profitable years of my own life, were passed as a teacher in a similar institution. The recollection of the scenes and the labors of those years, is still fresh ; and in it, I find the ground of a lively sympathy with all that here transpires to-day. As a parent, too, I very well understand how deep and tender is the interest which those must naturally feel, whose children bear a part in the exercises and excitements which belong to the occasion. It would seem impossible but that to all, whether more or less directly concerned in what is done in these closing hours of another year of study, there should come some deep and serious sense of the significance of the scene which is presented.

Yet, after all, I confess to a strong conviction, that even those of us who may understand the matter best, and still more the public generally who have no personal relations to the occasion, are very far from having an adequate impression of the magnitude and moment of the work which is going on in an institution such as this, and the progress in which, is illustrated by the closing examinations and exercises of a session. As in the studio of the artist, the rough material is to be wrought and polished into forms of admirable grace, even so here, the natural traits of individual mind and character, are to be moulded into the nearest possible approximation to the ideal of living excellence—to the fair conception of what is absolutely perfect, both in intellectual and moral culture. To what more difficult, or more profoundly interesting undertaking, is it possible that human effort should be applied.

To realize the highest and best type of female education—this is the end to be achieved. The question what is the system of education most appropriate to woman, has happily become one of the great practical questions of our times. Its answer must depend on the views which shall obtain, as to what is her proper sphere and

mission. If woman is to be, what she has very generally been made, not only among barbarous nations, but even through the greater part of civilized Europe—a laborer and a drudge ; then there is need of a discipline adapted to prepare her for such a station. If woman is to be only what the butterfly in the meadow is to a little child—something to be admired as pretty and chased by way of pastime ; then the chief aim in her education may fitly be to teach her to put on gaudy colors, and to flutter with due grace. If, as is so earnestly maintained by some, she can not enjoy her rights and dignity, without being transformed into an Amazon, and sent out into the arena of public life, to jostle the coarser sex in the scramble for wealth, honor and position, and to cause her voice to be heard in the clamorous halls of high debate ; then she must, in some way, be despoiled of her feminine instincts, and nurtured into the rudeness and effrontery which such a course demands. But if she is capable of high intellectual, social and moral activity ; if she is to bear high responsibilities, and to be in a position to exert effectual influence, for good or ill, not simply on the pleasure or the happiness of a few, but on the character and destinies of the

race ; then she should be trained for these great things, by a fitting development and cultivation of all the constitutional capacities she has. That such are her capabilities and her true relations, it is quite unnecessary, I am sure, to offer proof in this assembly. With us, at least, she is to be the central pillar of the intelligent, virtuous and Christian home, around which all its precious interests cluster, and on which its stability must essentially depend. Or to change the figure, it is in the midst of such a home that she is to plant her throne, and to reign with such power as she shall be capable of wielding ; and from that high position, she is to scatter blessings, such as can not be adequately told, around her ; or, like one of the fabled Furies, to be a minister of mischief as “terrible as hell.”

The education, then, which woman wants, is that which will give her POWER—power for good in the sphere she is to occupy ; and that method is of course the best, which gives her this in the largest measure. That is a very narrow view of education, which includes in it little or nothing beyond the attainment of force of intellect and the acquisition of knowledge. Intellectual force is certainly an element of power ; but it is by no means the grand ele-

ment, the almost sole element as it is sometimes taken to be, of that power for good which it is the best end of education to confer. It is easy to find examples of persons possessing ample force of intellect, who are yet incapable of exerting much influence of any kind on others, and least of all, a salutary influence; and one may have the intellectual energy of Satan, and be withal as hateful, and as incapable of good, as he.

So in regard to knowledge. It is indeed power, as has been said; that is, it is an important means or instrument of power. Yet knowledge may be possessed, and confer no power at all, or next to none; or it may give power for evil only, and not for good. The want of something else in combination with it, may render it worse than useless.

The truth unquestionably is, that it is *character*—taking the word in its broadest sense—on which power for good depends. Let there be all the energy of intellect which the severest discipline can give; of course there can not be too much of this great attainment. Let there be all the affluence of learning which diligence can gather from the varied field of knowledge; so much the better. There is nothing that can

be learned, in letters, in science, or in art, which it is not worth one's while to know. But then with these, there must be combined attainments of wholly another kind, attainments which are so essential as elements of personal excellence, that without them character is necessarily incomplete and weak ; while with them, it is developed into symmetry and beauty, and is fitted to command enduring confidence, homage and affection. Every one of us can probably think of individuals within the circle of our acquaintance, who with no extraordinary intellectual vigor, nor any wide range of knowledge, possess a high degree of salutary power,—power to interest, to influence and to bless all with whom they come in contact ; and they owe it to what ? To the fact that along with a sound understanding and a respectable amount of knowledge, they exhibit the fruits of a proper ethical and æsthetic culture, in an engaging and admirable harmony of character. Education, then, in the case of either sex, has failed to accomplish its highest end, whatever it may have done, if such a culture has not been achieved.

The first thing to which I will particularly refer as included in that department of educa-

tion which stands related more immediately to character, is *self-government*. Self-government consists in the subjection of inward impulses of every kind, to the control of reason and conscience acting through the will. These impulses are the springs of human activity. Every human breast is full of them. Some of them are vague instincts; undefined and half-conscious inclinations and yearnings of the soul. Some are appetites, which are things of definite consciousness, and which have their specific and well known objects. Some are passions, which have their ground in the natural temperament, and their immediate cause in occasional excitements. They impel to action, but, in the present condition of our nature, as often to wrong action as to right. They are to the soul, what the winds, and the waves, and the currents, are to the vessel on the sea,—the cause of motion, but requiring chart, and compass, and the controlling helm, to make the motion right and useful. It is the grand misery of at least half the world, that they have no self mastery, and do not try to have. They are too reckless to think or care whether the promptings of inclination will lead them right or wrong. They have no idea of self resistance

and self-conquest. They weakly and foolishly conclude, that they are bound to be, in their character and life, what nature and circumstances have made them in their propensities; and so they commit themselves, like ships abandoned to their fate, to all the fitful gusts and surges of ungoverned impulse and emotion, heedless of what the consequence may be. Such shamelessly abandon the high and glorious prerogatives of a rational and moral nature; and who can wonder that they should make, as they are seen to do by thousands, an utter wreck of happiness and hope. For every one who is thus dashed on fatal rocks, it might be written as the most appropriate epitaph,—“He died as a fool dieth.”

And while self-government is a most necessary attainment to every human being, it is least of all to be dispensed with in the case of the gentler sex. The impulses of woman are constitutionally quicker, and her feelings more intense, than those of man. She moves in a sphere in which wayward and ill-regulated dispositions are mischievous in a preeminent degree. Out in the noisy world, where all interests and all partizanships contend in rude collision, capriciousness, self-will, and unbri-

dled passion are sufficiently repulsive ; but in the peaceful precincts of the family and home, where gentle courtesies, and guileless thoughts, and sweet affections, should evermore be found, such exhibitions are mean and hateful in the last degree. In such a place, an inconsiderate, wilful, waspish individual, is like a rough stone thrown into a machine of admirable mechanism, which, harshly grating as it goes, deranges everything by its pernicious friction ; or better still, perhaps, like the arch fiend in the primeval paradise, whose only errand in the world, was to destroy the happiness which his own evil dispositions rendered him incapable of sharing. On woman, therefore, certainly there rests the highest possible obligation, to acquire the habit of self-government. Without it, there will be no beauty in her life. She must, as she would not utterly fail to fulfill her high mission in the world, bring reason and conscience, enlightened by the Scriptures, to sit in judgment constantly on the impulses and the passions of the heart ; and to subject them to such limitations and restraints, as shall make them answer their true end. To give this self-control, is just as much the legitimate business of education, as it is to impart the

power of steady application or of vigorous reasoning to the intellect. It will not come by accident; there must be a subjection to appropriate discipline; a discipline patiently and faithfully applied.

Next to self government, in this general department of education, may be placed the *culture of the imagination*. This faculty, especially with minds of the higher order, has a most important influence in the determination and the development of character. Out of the elements supplied by observation and experience, together with the images and the analogies suggested by the fancy, the soul, by the imaginative power, is all the while creating its own realms of thought; producing the very atmosphere in which it lives, and imparting tinges of light and shade, as the case may be, to all things. To each individual, of course, life is, to a very great extent, what his own imagination makes it. It is not so much on the things themselves by which we are surrounded that our own happiness or unhappiness depends, as on the state of our own imaginations in relation to these things. Our condition may be as nearly perfect as is possible, in such a world as this; and yet a morbid imagination

shall distort every thing into repulsiveness, and surround us with legions of demons and hobgoblins begotten by itself. And on the other hand it often happens, that where the way of life appears to lie through an arid, dreary desert, such a charm is thrown about it by a healthful imagination, that it seems to be redolent with the fragrance of sweet flowers, and to murmur with the music of ever-flowing waters. Certainly it is the very extreme of folly to neglect the education of a faculty so wonderful in power for evil or for good; to leave it to the influence of circumstances, without any restraint or guidance. To this neglect, it is doubtless true, that the wretchedness of thousands of lives which should have been bright and happy, may fairly be ascribed.

And it would seem that the proper culture of the imagination is, in the case of woman, especially demanded. It is hers to move in a comparatively retired and quiet sphere. The larger part of her life is likely to be passed quite away from the clatter of the noisy world, the world of fact and sense. For her, there will, of necessity, be many hours in which the soul will be left to its own self-communings. If in these circumstances, she has a pure and

healthful, and yet rich and vigorous imagination, she will often forget the cares and toils which the passing day may bring, while she invests the most ordinary things with the enchantment of a rosy light, or summons up around her an endless variety of bright and beautiful creations. Then literally,

Her mind,
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms ;
Her memory, be as a dwelling place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies ;—

and she will be preeminent in power, not only to enjoy herself, but to assist others also to enjoy whatever pleasures the sphere in which she moves may offer. The little incidents of domestic life, the sunny smile, or the thoughtful gaze of childhood, the ever new unfoldings of the traits of individual character, and of the sympathies and the affections which are common to human hearts wherever found ; all these will be continually exciting in her mind delightful trains of imaginative musing, innocent and pleasing always, and often highly profitable. The face of nature, too, as often as she shall look on it, will, to her eye, be dressed in smiles, and fraught with meaning ; and from its flowers, and fields, and woods, its changing skies, its setting suns, and the solemn beauty

of its midnight heavens, it will furnish the elements from which, in her high thoughts, she shall elaborate for herself glorious creations, the habitual vision of which, will at once delight and elevate the soul.

But on the other hand, let woman carry into the scenes of domestic life an imagination vitiated and unhealthful through neglect of proper culture. It will have a feverish restlessness. It will be inclined to revel in visionary schemes of action and success, and in its own extravagant pictures of pleasures which are impossible under the conditions which are imposed on human life. Or, taking a sombre passionate hue, it will delight in nursing a sentimental melancholy, and will choose the cypress shades of fictitious grief. It will beget a distate for life's plain and ordinary duties; will exaggerate the defects it sees in persons and in things; will tend to selfishness of feeling and irritability of temper; and so it will be likely not only to unfit for the cheerful discharge of duty, but also to become a cause of the keenest suffering, both to the individual herself, and to all who are about her. It is but too easy to find examples of this sort. In many a home, that should have been the abode of all kind charities, the

fountains of domestic happiness have been poisoned in this manner beyond the possibility of healing; and the brightest prospects have thus been only the prelude to broken hearts and irremediable wretchedness. Prometheus fastened to the naked mountain crag, with hungry vultures ever feeding on his vitals, is but too fit an emblem of a mind in which that noble faculty which should have hung the universe with gorgeous draperies, and scattered cheerful sunlight over all things, has been corrupted into an instrument of torture. It is surely worth the while, to employ the utmost power of education for the prevention of such a blighting of all the hopes of life as this. If it is true in respect to this as well as other faculties, that different minds exhibit natural diversities, which can not be removed entirely, it is also true that a patient and judicious culture, is sure to be rewarded with a good measure of success.

Not less important than the culture of a healthful imagination, in that part of education which bears more immediately on character, is the *formation of pure and elevated tastes*. It is no doubt true, that the ground of the widely different tastes or appetencies of mind,

which are exhibited, may lie, to some limited extent, in a difference of natural constitution. But after all, we believe that they are in the main the result of educational influences. The young are easily led to acquire the tastes of those with whom they immediately associate. By the force of example, or the influence of conversation, their attention is directed towards particular objects of interest, to which at first, perhaps, they were altogether indifferent, until a decided relish for them is awakened and confirmed.

But it is a fact which forces itself painfully upon our notice, that even among those who are in many respects well educated, and who are surrounded with the most favorable social influences, there are comparatively few of whom it can be said that their tastes are truly pure and noble. The simple innocent pleasures which are found chiefly in the quiet scenes of life, which spring and grow where industry and prudence conjoined with sweet affections, make orderly, and virtuous, and cheerful homes—how much less are they sought and valued by the many than the exciting, artificial pleasures which are invented first to stimulate, and then to pamper feverish desire. There is

a general eagerness for what is denominated fashionable life ; and yet how humiliating is the picture of such a life, if it be correctly drawn. What is there worthy of a rational nature—not to say of a responsible and immortal mind—in the chief things which those who lead that life are educated to admire ? In the circles of fashion, both with men and women, the chief end of living might well be deemed to be, to cheat each other with false pretences in the astutest manner possible. A show of wealth, a show of elegance, a show of beauty, a show of amiableness ; “every one walketh in a *vain* show” literally ; and life is all a seeming, not a being. The tastes are moulded to the admiration of the merely circumstantial and fictitious. By the influence of such tastes the mind is likely to become pitifully weak in its modes of thought, and low and even silly in its wishes and ambitions. It is made to see by a false light, and to judge by a false standard, in regard to the real objects of existence. Indeed to set forth adequately the emptiness and folly which are exhibited by those who are thus lost to simple truth and nature, requires the broad dashes of the comic pen, or the keen touches of the satirist. Addison in one of his

papers, makes one of his fashionable ladies write a letter after this sort.

“Mr. Shapely is the prettiest gentleman about town. He is very tall, but not too tall neither. He dances like an angel, and his mouth is made I do not know how, but it is the prettiest I ever saw in my life. He is always laughing, for he has an infinite deal of wit. If you did but see how he rolls his stockings! He has a thousand pretty fancies; and I am sure if you saw him you would like him. I wish you could see him dance. Now you must understand, poor Mr. Shapely has no estate; but how can he help that you know? and yet my friends are so unreasonable as to be always teasing me about him because he has no estate. But he is a good natured, ingenious, civil, tall, handsome man,—and I am obliged to him for his civilities ever since I saw him. I forgot to tell you that he has black eyes, and looks upon me now and then as if he had tears in them; and yet my friends are so unreasonable, that they would have me be uncivil to him.”

Too many ladies unfortunately, are so mis-educated, that this might be taken as a not unfair specimen of the tastes which they exhibit. But Pope hits off this class with somewhat more severity of tone.

“Yet mark the fate of a whole sex of queens;
 Power all their end, but beauty all the means:
 In youth they conquer with so wild a rage,
 As leaves them scarce a subject in their age.
 For foreign glory—foreign joy they roam;
 No thought of peace or happiness at home.
 A fop their passion, but their prize a sot;
 Alive ridiculous, and dead, forgot.”

This touches, no doubt, on the extreme examples of the fashionable lady. But it is sad enough to think that there should be any to sit for such a picture. It is enough to move one's indignation that woman with her intellectual acuteness, her nice perceptions, her generous impulses, and her capacity for the noblest occupations, should be trained up for a life of such inanity. In every instance of such perversion of what is most admirable in woman's nature, it is as if a star were precipitated from its sphere, and all its glory quenched.

Certainly it must be made a prominent aim in the work of education, to cultivate such tastes as utterly indispose and incapacitate for the wretched insipidity and emptiness of a life of fashionable display or of unworthy pleasures. Is it asked what tastes we more especially intend? We answer, a taste for sincere and simple manners; for useful and healthful occupation; for pleasures that refresh

the mind and leave it pure ; for the chastely beautiful in nature and in art ; for books and friends which will aid the mind to unfold its powers, add to its intellectual wealth, and stimulate its fertility. There is no intelligent parent who may not very early do much to turn the attention to such things, and excite a fervent admiration for them. There is no competent instructor who may not if he pleases ; there is no wise instructor who does not in reality, exert a powerful influence in the same direction ; and it is one of the sweet rewards of his wearisome and often unappreciated labor, that the faithful teacher sometimes sees his efforts to enkindle in the soul a genuine love of excellence—to excite a hearty sympathy with what is pure and true, and an aspiration towards it—in a high degree successful. Where before there seemed to be an absence of the more elevated tastes of which the mind is capable, there has been effected all at once, and perhaps by some very simple means, an awakening of such tastes into activity ; and as a consequence, a beautiful development of generous sentiments, and of the refined and graceful traits which belong to the highest type of merely natural character ; and many a pupil,

in the delightful consciousness of such a quickening of his inner being, has cherished, throughout the whole of life, a deep and fervent gratitude to those whose wise and patient faithfulness had wrought it in him.

But there is a still more essential element in the human constitution, which education is imperatively bound to reach; I mean the *moral sense*—the *conscience*. It seems to have been taken for granted by too many, that conscience is a sort of constant quantity in the structure of the soul, which must be taken in each case, as we find it, and must be left to its own natural developement; and it may strike such strangely that the idea of educating the moral faculty should be suggested. But why should the susceptibility to moral impression, be more than any other susceptibility, incapable of culture? The susceptibility to the effect of natural beauty and deformity, we are well aware, may be rendered exquisite by cultivation; and why not the susceptibility to moral beauty and deformity as well?

The obvious fact is that the moral faculty is capable of education, and has been too generally educated wrong. It excites our wonder that the conscience of the youth of Sparta

should have been taught to approve successful falsehood as a virtue; or that of the Hindoo mother, to command, in spite of the pleadings of natural affection, the drowning of her infant, as an act of the purest piety. But everywhere about us we may see examples which equally evince a perverted moral sense. What is more common than to see people not wanting in intelligence, who make conscience of doing the most unconscionable things? What is the whole history of fanaticism in all its various forms, but the history of such a misdirection? How conscientiously have the fires of persecution been lighted up, and cruelties the most abhorrent inflicted on the innocent; or to take a narrower view, in the common affairs of life, how many things are daily said and done, which indicate a want of that fine moral sensibility which shrinks from the least departure from the rules of right. The insincerity, the equivocations, the false pretences, the hollow professions, in short, the numberless tamperings with truth by word or action—*white lies*, as Mrs. Opie calls them, and yet but a dingy white at best—which prevail even in respectable society, afford the painful and abundant proof, that either through perversion

or what comes to the same thing, for want of proper culture, the conscience fails to perform its office.

Now the want of a nice moral sensibility is fatal to any high degree of excellence in any character. No matter what other qualities may be exhibited ; no matter how high a grace of manner, nor how many charms of person, nor what brilliancy of intellectual gifts may be possessed, by any individual. The beauty of the whole is marred ; the character fails at once to command a genuine admiration, so soon as it is seen that there is no quick perception of the difference between right and wrong ; no lively feeling of moral obligation. Experience shows that where this grand defect exists it is not safe to repose our confidence ; and such as exhibit it, are generally in fact regarded, by those who understand them, with suspicion. And it is utterly repugnant to the idea of a well educated and truly accomplished woman, that she be supposed to be capable of regarding anything clearly wrong without aversion, or of contemplating moral loveliness in any of its forms without delight. We are all the more disposed, from the position which it belongs to woman ordinarily to occupy, to

expect and demand in her this purity of moral feeling, and rectitude of moral judgment ; and it should therefore be labored all the more, in the course of her education, not only on the one hand to guard against those influences which blunt or vitiate the moral sense, but also on the other, to surround her with such as shall tend to augment its susceptibility, and to give accuracy to its decisions. A tender conscience is likely to produce those outward virtues which constitute an amiable character, even where there does not as yet exist the inward virtues of a renewed and holy heart ; and it is not to be doubted, that a heart in which there is habitually a lively sense of the deformity of vice, and the loveliness of virtue, is much more likely to be open to those influences which beget in it true goodness, and unite it savingly to God, than one in which such moral sensibility is wanting. We can not too deeply feel, that of all parts of the great work of education, that which pertains to the moral element in the constitution of our being, is the very highest in importance ; for it is this element which connects us most directly with God and immortality.

It will be obvious then to every thoughtful person, that there is good ground for the suggestion made at the outset of these remarks, that but few, comparatively, comprehend the greatness and difficulty of the work which is daily carried forward in the peaceful halls of study, where the plastic elements of mind and heart are to be moulded. It is a broad work which is to be accomplished. It is one of such interest as words are insufficient to express. It is not merely to discipline the understanding and to gather up treasures of knowledge in the memory; but in addition to these things, to produce the calm dignity of self-control, to train the imagination to a chaste and healthful brilliancy and power; to form the tastes to delight only in such pleasures or pursuits, as are simple, innocent and worthy of man's higher nature; and finally, so to cultivate the moral sensibility, as that the conscience shall be at once tender and enlightened; to develop all the attributes of mind, all the essential elements of virtuous character, into the completeness, symmetry and beauty, which constitute high excellence—this is the work to which these sweet retreats are sacred, and for which these social, intellectual and moral disciplines,

have been instituted and administered. Such I am happy to believe, is the high end which is steadily kept in view by the accomplished instructors of this favored institution. They are doing what they can to elevate the type of female character among us, and so to add to the salutary influence and power of woman. And I am sure that among those who have been gathered here for study, there are many who have entered fully into this great idea, and have felt an honorable ambition to be themselves examples of all that is most to be admired in the noblest of their sex. I know that there are hearts here, in which the desire for such excellence as results from the highest, and the completest culture, glows with the fervor of a passion. I know there must be those before whose vision floats continually an ideal of feminine perfection, into which enter all the higher elements of character, and towards which their hearts are yearning ever. To approach it they are striving, and intend to strive through life. They will approach it. They will be rich in intellectual resources. They will be rich in the nobler qualities on which influence and power for good depend ; and wherever Providence may place them, they will

shine as bright and glorious stars, while a thousand meteors flash their little moment and disappear forever.

It is the portrait of such a woman that Wordsworth has so exquisitely drawn, in one of the finest of his minor pieces.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A spirit—yet a woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet,
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and smiles!

And now I see, with eye serene,
The very pulse of the machine;
A Being breathing thoughtful breath;
A Traveller between life and death;
The reason firm—the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength and skill;
A perfect woman—nobly planned
To warn, to comfort and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of an Angel light!

Than such a woman, there is nothing on this earth more lovely, more divine. To form such, surely is a glorious task. To be such—is to reach an eminence of honor, power, and blessedness, with which the heart which has the loftiest aspirings, may very well rest content.

May God, throughout all time, fill all our homes with mothers and with daughters formed to such a model!

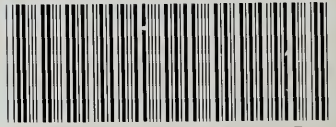
I will detain you only while I add, that it is to be gratefully acknowledged, that the religious faith in which we have been nurtured, not only harmonizes with the highest and best culture of our whole being, but is itself, where it is vital in the heart, the most effectual means of producing such a culture. You will not expect me to forget, on this occasion, that I am a Christian minister. You will suffer me to say that it is in the blessed gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that all our good impulses must begin; and that it is by its motives, and in its spirit, that we are to strive to educate ourselves, if we are to attain to a true elevation and refinement; if we are to acquit ourselves worthily under the high responsibilities of life. The New Testament—how pure the spirit which it breathes around our souls! How admirable the character which it portrays—the self-education on which it so earnestly insists! That divine model which it presents, that living realization of humanity in absolute perfection in the person of Jesus Christ—how it is fitted to exalt our conceptions of the beauty of true

goodness ! And as a motive power to urge our souls to right affections and to high endeavors, what is there comparable at all to that deep, grateful love, which is kindled and sustained by gazing on the amazing sacrifice of Calvary !

Ah yes ! It is by the light, and under the influences of our divine religion, that our education is to be carried forward most effectually. We can not hesitate to labor, in the training of our minds and the shaping of our characters, if we have the firm assurance that we shall reap the rich reward of our efforts and our sacrifices—not only in the coming years of our earthly life, but also amid the brighter scenes, and the more glorious activities of that immortal life which lies a little way before us. And such a reward we shall reap, if, on Christian principles, we strive to reach the highest forms of real excellence. To those of you who in the warmth of early hopes, are opening your fresh hearts to forming influences, it is indeed a weighty thought, that character is an imperishable thing. It is a glorious thought, that if now you lay its foundations right, and rear the structure well, not a grace of it shall perish, not an element decay, in all the round of everlasting years. Your force of intellect, your

accumulated knowledge, your mastery of self, your high culture of imagination, taste and moral feeling—not one of these shall be left behind, when the spirit, ripe for Heaven, shall plume its wing for its bright eternal home. By these you shall be qualified for the grander scenes of action and enjoyment, for which the God who made you, designed your immortal being!

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